Psalm 23 is probably the most familiar psalm to believers and unbelievers alike. For the Lord’s people, however, each line consoles the soul and reminds us that whatever befalls us we have a great and glorious Shepherd who never stops caring for us. The experiential truth of Psalm 23 was once again made evident to my wife and me as we were recently both struck low for a month with COVID-19. In fact, my dear wife spent one of those weeks in the hospital being treated for what the doctors described as COVID pneumonia. During these trying days, I was brought very low on more than one occasion, not knowing what the Lord’s good pleasure would be for either of us. However, once the gray clouds of providence passed over and I had regained enough strength and had my desire to read restored, I turned to my favorite place in all of scripture, the Psalms. The opening line of Psalm 23 nested once again in my heart and mind: “The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.” It was Spurgeon who said, “If he be a Shepherd to no one else, he is a Shepherd to me; he cares for me, watches over me, and preserves me. The words are in the present tense. Whatever be the believer’s position, he is even now under the pastoral care of Jehovah.” Oh, what a glorious truth! It’s my hope and prayer that you too can say, “I am not alone for I have a great Shepherd who cares even now for me.”

— Chris Hanna

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Visit us online at prts.edu —
The 2021 Puritan Reformed Conference, held on August 26–28, was richly blessed by the Lord and a great encouragement to all who attended. On day one, the conference got off to a good start. Dr. Stephen Myers stressed our profound issue of sin and the gospel remedy of Christ in his address entitled “The Gospel Need.” Dr. Myers’s address was followed by Dr. Jon Payne, who spoke movingly on the eternal covenant of redemption. His address was “The Gospel Planned,” stressing the amazing love and grace of God.

The second day of the conference opened with Dr. Greg Salazar giving us a clear and earnest presentation of Christ’s active and passive obedience as essential for our salvation. Rev. Rob McCurley followed and spoke profoundly on Christ’s work of reconciliation in the gospel from 2 Corinthians 5:18–20. In the afternoon, Dr. David Hall provided a more technical yet interesting address on the major gospel themes preached in the early sermons of the New Testament church, covering apostolic messages contained in Acts 2–5.

That afternoon, attendees could choose from three breakout sessions: Dr. Josh Buice—pastor in Douglasville, Georgia, and organizer of the G3 conference—on “Gospel-inspired Gratitude,” Rev. McCurley on “Ceremonial Shadows and the Gospel,” and Dr. Jon Payne on “Law and Gospel.” All three were well attended and well received. Later that evening, I preached on “The Essence of the Gospel” from 1 Timothy 1:15–17. The second day of the conference closed with all eight speakers involved in a helpful Q&A session, chaired by Dr. Mark Kelderman.
The conference’s final day opened with Dr. Josh Buice delivering a powerful message on “Gospel Empowerment,” based on Romans 12:1–2, stressing how the Holy Spirit empowers believers for both total surrender and sanctification. Our own Dr. Mark Kelderman gave the final address on “Gospel Hope,” based on 1 Peter 3–9, bringing the conference to a close by taking us, as it were, to the joys and fullness of heaven, where hope will be swallowed up by love forever.

To the hundreds who attended in person throughout the conference and the thousands who live-streamed the event, the PRTS conference committee would like to thank you. It is our hope and trust you were richly blessed. Mark your calendars and join us for the 2022 Puritan Reformed Conference, “The Grace of Salvation.” Next year’s event will be August 25–27. Lord willing, our speakers will be Michael Barrett, Voddie Baucham, Joel Beeke, Jerry Bilkes, Adriaan Neele, Daniel Timmer, David McWilliams, and Jonathan Gibson.

—Joel R. Beeke

On Friday, October 22, a number of our faculty and staff gathered together with forty-seven of our volunteers for a luncheon that was held in their honor. These dedicated individuals serve the seminary and its students in a variety of ways. Many of them volunteer at the Regenerate Thrift Shop, which sells gently used items to the public and uses the profits to support the PRTS Scholarship Fund. It has been a real blessing over the years to watch as the Lord has continued to bless the efforts of these volunteers and the thrift store ministry. Many others volunteer their time and talent to the food pantry, which provides numerous on-campus students and their families with various food items, as well as other household materials. If not for these dedicated individuals who work to make this possible, many of our students would find it difficult to make financial ends meet their many obligations. The food pantry is an important ministry for the practical day to day needs of our students. Still others volunteer to assist with student housing and facility needs. These individuals, like the rest, are a vital part of the seminary’s ongoing operations. If not for their assistance, the seminary’s ability to provide housing for its on-campus students would be greatly hindered. No less important are the number of individuals who serve on the seminary’s Board of Trustees. These men take seriously their responsibility to provide governance to the seminary and ensure that it remains faithful to the Word of God and the Reformed confessional heritage. Seminary life for many of its students, as well as its staff and faculty, are enriched by the dedicated service of so many of its volunteers and the sharing of their time, talent, and energy.

—Chris Hanna
1. How would you describe your experience studying at PRTS?

My experience at PRTS was challenging and rewarding. It was challenging because of the program’s rigorous character and that I went through it as I served in Ecuador as a full-time minister and missionary. It was rewarding because I had the chance to deepen my exegetical skills as I worked further on the original languages and current issues related to the Old and New Testaments. Also, I was able to take a few elective courses that allowed me to better understand the contributions of English Puritanism as well as those of the Nadere Reformatie to Reformed theology and practice.

2. Where are you currently serving?

I serve as a URCNA missionary minister in Quito, Ecuador. I have pastored a church named Iglesia Reformada Luz de Vida since 2014. I am sent and supervised by Covenant Reformed Church in Pella, Iowa.

3. What are your main activities as the minister of Iglesia Reformada Luz de Vida?

I spend most of my time as a minister in preaching and teaching-related activities. We offer a morning and an evening service every Lord’s Day and a midweek Bible study preceded by an hour of prayer. I try to teach our basic and membership courses when I am available, as well as some courses in our new Pastoral Training Program. I also spend time in visiting and counseling sessions with the congregation.

4. How are you using the ThM degree you earned from PRTS in your current setting?

First, my ThM training has allowed me to become a better interpreter of Scripture and hopefully a better preacher. I also teach candidates in the ministry of the Word at the Pastoral Training Program our church started in Quito. The focus of my work as a teacher is the area of biblical studies. I particularly enjoy working and teaching the original languages.

5. Tell us a little more about the Pastoral Training Program you started at Iglesia Reformada Luz de Vida.

The seminary training offered is very limited in Ecuador. Luz de Vida is a confessionally Reformed church that requires its officers to subscribe to the Three Forms of Unity. Also, our consistory is aware of the importance of seminary training, especially for men aspiring to the office of minister of the Word, in terms of academic rigor, curriculum, and focus. After many years of prayer, it became apparent that no option suited our needs. Therefore, the consistory decided to start what is now called the Pastoral Training Program. At this time, we have thirteen students, eight from our own congregation. Our prayer is that the Lord will prepare and call these men to be faithful preachers and church planters here in Ecuador.
As the interest in PRTS grows from prospective students worldwide, the seminary continues to face a housing market shortage that directly impacts the number of on-campus students the seminary can accept and train. According to one website, the Grand Rapids housing market trend has seen a 22.4 percent increase in average sale prices, an 8.6 percent increase in home sales, and a decrease of average days on the market of 14.3 percent per year for the last five years. Most homes receive multiple offers, and the typical home sells for about 7 percent over list price; more desirable homes sell for approximately 15 percent over list price and sell in four days or less.

Rental properties in and around Grand Rapids continue to be in high demand as well. Rental prices have increased from 5 to 10 percent over last year. In 2010, the rental vacancy rate in Grand Rapids peaked at 9.54 percent. That vacancy rate dropped in 2019 to 4.12 percent, leaving fewer rental properties on the open market.

Several years ago, PRTS sought to solve its student housing shortage by constructing two apartment units totaling sixteen apartments. These apartments have been 100 percent occupied from their opening day. Recently, by the grace of God, a neighbor agreed to sell their property to PRTS. This new home of 2,920 sq. ft. will help alleviate the ongoing student-housing issue, providing housing for up to eight single students. There is also potential for additional apartments to be added to this property if future demand requires it.

We humbly praise God for providing this student housing and for the many PRTS partners who freely and graciously have come alongside us to make purchasing this home a reality.

SCHOLARSHIP FUND: MATCHING GIFTS!
As we approach year end, our greatest need at the moment is for the Scholarship Fund. Happily, we have matching gifts available for donations given to this fund from November 15 until the end of the year. When you send in your year end donation, if you wish to have it doubled, make sure that you earmark your gift: “PRTS Scholarship Fund.” Many thanks for your ongoing prayers, friendship, and generosity.

NEXT PRTS TOUR TRIP:
ISRAEL AND JORDAN OR EGYPT
On May 8-20, 2023, D.V., Dr. Beeke and David Woollin hope to lead a 12-day PRTS tour trip to Israel and either Jordan or Egypt. If you would like to be placed on a mailing list to receive information about this trip as soon as it is available (hopefully by early next year), please submit your name(s) and email to Ann Dykema ann.dykema@prts.edu

The new home is to the left of the current student apartments and PRTS campus.
David Woollin and I had the privilege of leading a group of 39 people through Greece and Turkey for twelve days as we followed the footsteps of Paul and John. Here is a succinct summary.

October 4–5: We had an excellent journey to Greece: all 39 of us arrived in Thessaloniki, Greece on time with all our luggage intact. That morning we visited two historic places: the Roman Agora where Paul almost certainly preached nearly 2000 years ago to a mixed crowd of Hellenists and Jews, and the White Tower where many Christians were killed centuries ago.

October 6: Today we drove from Thessaloniki to Philippi. Highlights included: (1) seeing the place where Lydia was baptized by Paul as Europe’s first convert as the fruit of Paul’s first sermon in Europe; (2) visiting the vast amphitheater in Philippi where various forms of cultural entertainment occurred, probably including the throwing of Christians to lions; (3) seeing the vast archeological remains at Philippi, including the prison where Paul and Silas sang in the inner prison and the Philippian jailor was saved; and (4) visiting Kavala (ancient Neapolis), the port through which Paul passed with Silas on his way from Asia into Europe.

October 7: This morning we flew from Thessaloniki to Athens, the capital and largest city of Greece with a population of four million souls. We first went up to the Acropolis which towers over the city and contains the famous Parthenon, the Erechtheion with its Porch of Maidens and the Temple of Athena Nike, all from the fifth century B.C. We then went to the Areopagus (Mars Hill) where Paul gave his famous Christ-centered address to Athenian city leaders.

October 8: Today we viewed the Panathenaic Stadium, built in 1896 entirely of marble, in Athens, Greece. It was the site of the first Olympic Games of the modern era. Here we took our first group picture. Next we headed to the nearby port city of Piraeus, where Paul landed when he came to Athens on his second missionary journey. We boarded the beautiful sailing yacht, the MS Panorama, our home for the next week.

October 9: We sailed to the town of Pythagoreio on the island of Samos, birthplace of the ancient philosopher Pythagoras. Later we sailed for the mainland of Turkey, docking in the port city of Kusadasi.

October 10: On the Lord’s Day, we held services on the boat. I preached on the churches of Ephesus and Smyrna from Revelation 2, and Pastor David Woollin preached on Colossians 1:23, on our need for building a firm foundation in Christ. It was a restful, worshipful day with sweet fellowship.

October 11: Our first stop was ancient Ephesus, home of the most impressive archeological site in all of Turkey. The remains are breath-taking, particularly the Library of Celsus there which was one of the largest in the ancient world, but we also saw the well-preserved remains of the Temple of Artemis, the Roman baths, the Odeion, the Marble Road where Paul walked, and public buildings such as the town hall. 

Paul spent nearly three years working in Ephesus during his third missionary journey. I had the privilege of standing and preaching on the very place where Paul often preached on the public square or “gathering place” (called the Agora) of Ephesus. In the great Ephesian amphitheater which seats 25,000, we sang some Psalters. The acoustics were amazing.

In the afternoon, we drove to Sardis, Turkey, one of the seven churches of Asia that was known for its spiritual deadness. We saw the Jewish synagogue where Paul probably preached, and on the other side of town, a small fourth-century Byzantine chapel that the Christians built on the ruins of the Temple of Artemis.

October 12: Today we visited the ancient remains of three of the seven churches in modern-day Turkey that received letters from Christ in Revelation 2 and 3 via the apostle John. First, we
visited the ancient remains of Smyrna, which today is the port city of Izmir, Turkey. Our next stop was Pergamum, known in biblical times as Pergamus. We took a cable car to the very windy and scenic hilltop of this dramatic archeological site. We ended a very full day with a quick visit to Thyatira, in Turkey, where the archeological remains are limited because they are surrounded by the modern-day city of Akhisar.

October 13: We left Turkey, sailing overnight to wake up on Wednesday morning, docked at the beautiful Greek island of Patmos where John wrote the book of Revelation while in exile. We visited the Grotto of the Apocalypse, the cave where John is believed to have received his vision and recorded his message to the Seven Churches of Asia Minor. Afterward, some of us walked to a site where John, on the shore of Patmos, baptized converts who frequently came to him for baptism. Across the street from this baptism site is a beautiful, small church dedicated to the apostle John.

We then sailed to the touristy, beautiful Greek island of Mykonos, arriving at dusk. Andy, our able tour guide, led us to the sixteenth-century windmills through the narrow walkways between the white-painted buildings.

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**FACULTY ITINERARIES & PUBLICATIONS**

**MICHAEL BARRETT**
November 14: Deckerville, Michigan: First Baptist Church

**JOEL BEEKE** | Itinerary
November 1–2: Franca, Brazil: conference
November 7: Kalamazoo, Michigan: preaching for Kalamazoo Reformed Church (a.m.)
November 9–11: Burlington, North Carolina: NAPARC meetings
November 11–15: Pensacola, Florida: conference and preaching for Pastor Jeff Pollard
November 20–22: Kansas City, Missouri: preach for Pastor Tony Felich, Redeemer PCA
November 27–28: Tallmadge, Ohio: preach for Pastor David Saxton, Falls Berean Bible Church
December 3–5: Raleigh, North Carolina: conference for Pastor Matt Holst, Shiloh Presbyterian Church
December 16–20: Greenville, South Carolina: conference organized by Steven Lee, sermonaudio.com
December 26: Wyoming, Michigan: preach for Pastor Andrew Willis, Maplelawn Baptist Church
December 27–29: Philippines: conference organized by Franco Ferrer
December 30–January 3: Alberta: preach for Monarch FRC and Lethbridge URC

**DANIEL TIMMER** | Itinerary
November 22: San Antonio, Texas: Presenting “God in Zephaniah” at the Society of Biblical Literature
November 29–December 3: Taipei, Taiwan: Teaching at China Reformed Theological Seminary
November/December: Montreal, Quebec: Teaching at St. Jean Reformed Church

**Recent Publications**
Prophetic Otherness: Constructions of Otherness in Prophetic Literature, edited with S. V. Davidson (London: T & T Clark).


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**GREG SALAZAR** | Itinerary
November 7: Hudsonville, Michigan: Preaching at Trinity PCA
November 15–18: Ft. Worth, Texas: Presenting “Puritan Pastoral Theology and Wealth” at the Evangelical Theological Society

**Recent Publications**

The Puritan Path, with Stephen McCaskell (RHB).

Editor, God’s Grace Shining through the Law (RHB).

Editor, The Lord’s Supper by John Shower (SDG).

Zekerheid van het geloof: volgens de puriteinen (De Banier).

Getting Back into the Race (in Slovak) (Dobra Sparva).
PURITAN REFORMED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

FINANCIAL REPORT

For period 8/1/2020–10/1/2021

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By the grace of God PRTS is being sustained. Thank you, dear friends, for partnering with us!

—CHRIS HANNA

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  - Scholarship Fund
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  - Puritan Resource Center

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  - Card # ________________________________
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